

Interview questions

I. Family, the concept of family, family image

1. Did you have a dog as a child?
2. Overall, what would you say your childhood was like? Did you have a brother or sister? What was your relationship like with them and your parents?
3. List the members of your family.

II. School

1. Where did you go to school? Why did you choose that school? Did you like going to school? Did you have many friends?
2. Why did you choose the career you did?

III. Work, career

1. When did you start working? What was your first job?
2. Where do you work now? When did you have to work the most?
3. How do you balance your work and private life? Which of your jobs has been the most difficult? Did you have a dog then? How do you reconcile your private life and dog ownership?

IV. Relationship – highlighted

1. Do you currently have a relationship/partner?
2. How many long-term relationships (lasting at least 6 months) have you had in your life? If so, when did you have your first one? Have you lived together, if not, why? If not, what do you think was the reason?
3. Have you ever had a relationship in which the idea of having children came up? What eventually happened?

4. Have you ever had a relationship in which the idea of owning a dog came up? What happened in the end? How does your partner get along with your dog?

V. Life with dog

1. Why and how did you choose your current dog? What role does your dog play in your life? What is the psychological background to this? Why do you feel the need to care for a living creature?

2. How does an average day with your dog go? When you go to work, where is your dog? How do different holidays differ from everyday life?

3. Do you have help with dog ownership? If yes: Do you pay for this help and how did you choose to get it? Do you usually help others with their dog?

4. How does your immediate environment treat your dog? How do you call your dog when you are around close friends? What about when you talk about your dog with colleagues or strangers? Do you ever refer to yourself as the "mother" or "mum" of the dog?

5. Do you think you have been positively/negatively discriminated against in your wider environment because of your dog? (Do you ever receive unsolicited advice?) If so, how do you deal with it?)

6. How much you talk to your friends about dogs? Do you have any friends that you only met because of the dog? How much time do you spend together? (If she/he can't think of any, you can ask if they talk on walks together). Do you have any friends from whom you have become estranged because of the dog (e.g. because he is afraid of dogs, allergic to dog hair)?

7. What is the joy of owning a dog? What makes it difficult to keep a dog? Have you ever wanted to get rid of your dog? (If this is a very tough question: do you know anyone who has thought about this?)

8. How satisfied are you with your relationship with your dog? Could it be improved or is it perfect as it is? What could make living together better? Have you had any difficult periods? Does the dog have behavioural problems? If so, what are they?

VI. Perception of child (non-)bearing?

From childless people:

1. What do you find most difficult about having children these days?

2. Are children part of your life? If yes, in what way? Do you care for someone else (e.g. an elderly person)?
3. In your personal life, have you benefited from not having children?
4. In your private life, have you experienced any negative discrimination related to not having children?
5. In your work/career, have you experienced any advantages from having/not having children?
6. What do you think about the environment (epidemics, climate change, food shortages)? Has this influenced/influenced your decision to have children? Some people think the Earth is overpopulated and that it is selfish to have children. Do you personally know someone who thinks so? What do you think?
7. Do you think it's possible that someone doesn't have children because they have a dog? Why?
8. And do you think it is possible that someone cannot have a child, or would like to have a child very much, but for some reason is afraid to have a child and therefore buys a dog? So that the dog can replace the child? Do you know anybody who does?
9. What do you think about someone adopting a child? (did it occur to you?) And about people who adopt a child on their own? (Did he or she consider having a child alone?)
10. If you had to start your life over again, would you make a different decision about having children? What would you do differently?

From parents:

1. What do you find most difficult about having children these days?
2. Do you care for someone other than children (e.g. an elderly person)? Are you used to helping others with childcare? What brings you joy in having children? What causes difficulties?
3. Do you have help with childcare? Do you pay for help? Where do you get help?
4. What do you think about the environment (epidemics, climate change, food shortages)? Has this influenced/affected your decision to have children? Some people think the Earth is overpopulated and that it is selfish to have children. Do you personally know someone who thinks so? What do you think?

5. Do you think it's possible that someone doesn't have children because they have a dog? Why?

6. And do you think it's possible that someone can't have a child, or wants to have a child very much but for some reason doesn't dare to, and that's why they buy a dog? So that the dog can replace the child? Do you know anybody who does?

7. What do you think about someone adopting a child? (did it occur to you?) And about people who adopt a child on their own? (Did he or she consider having a child alone?)

8. How compatible is caring for a young child with owning a dog? How have you managed it?

9. If you could start your life over again with having children, would you make a different decision? What would you do differently?

VII. Future

1. What are your plans for the future, how will you be living in 10 years?

2. When you retire, what are your plans: what will you do?

3. Who can you count on in your old age if you need some kind of care?

4. Is there anything you would like to change in your life: something you really want to do now?

VIII. Closure:

1. In relation to the topic of the interview, is there anything else you would like to say?

2. When you said yes to this interview, were you expecting any questions that I didn't ask?